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# EXPLORATION IN THE LAND OF THE YURACARÉS, EASTERN BOLIVIA

By KIRTLEY F. MATHER

Denison University

League upon league of monotonous, water-soaked, jungle-covered plain densely forested; brown streams, gliding silently down winding channels, occasionally lashed into foam by giant snags, a deadly menace to the incautious canoeist; rarely, a tiny *chacra*, or clearing, with a dozen banana trees and a patch of yuca, a palm-thatched hut, and a dugout canoe—this is the land of the Yuracarés, an Indian tribe of eastern Bolivia. The land of the Yuracarés occupies the little-known southwestern corner of the vast Amazon Basin where there still exists many a “river of doubt” waiting the time when some adventurous explorer shall chart its tortuous pathway. Its rivers are all affluents of the mile-wide Mamoré, one of the larger heads of the Madeira which in turn is one of the largest of the tributaries to the Amazon.

This land is today crossed by one of the South American transcontinental routes of trade and travel, but as yet none of the published maps of Bolivia show its geography with even approximate accuracy. Travelers have hitherto confined their attention to the main thoroughfare; the adjacent regions have scarcely been explored. The accompanying map (Fig. 1), which is based on reconnaissance traverses with pocket compass amplified by information obtained from local inhabitants, is one of the first to portray the geography of this region with any attempt at accuracy.

The land of the Yuracarés is bordered on the southwest by the ramparts of the Andes, the successive steep-walled ridges of which effectively separate eastern Bolivia from the high plateau of comparatively populous western Bolivia. Across the Cochabamban section of the Andes there leads a single treacherous trail, significantly named “Sal Si Puedes” (pass if you can), whose hundred miles form the only difficult part of the transcontinental journey. From the upper end of this trail at the town of Cochabamba there is direct rail communication to the Pacific coast at Arica; from its lower end at Todos Santos there is more or less trustworthy connection by river steamers of varying dimensions and comforts all the way to the mouth of the Amazon at Pará. But in the land of the Yuracarés there are only two modes of transportation—on foot or in canoe.

## TODOS SANTOS AND THE RIO CHAPARÉ

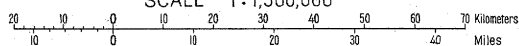
My party of five, three gringos and two Bolivians, bent on exploring the upper reaches of the Rio Securé, reached Todos Santos on August 12,





Compiled by Kirtley F. Mather  
1921

Compiled by Kirtley F. Mather

1921

SCALE 1:1,500,000



	Route	} Reconnaissance survey by K.F.Mather, Aug. 6 - Sept. 5, 1920
	Streams	
	Streams	{ Sketched from data supplied by Colonel Roman and Major Quintanillo, of the Bolivian Army and Wm. Henderson, Engineer for the Cochabamba Light and Power Co.
		

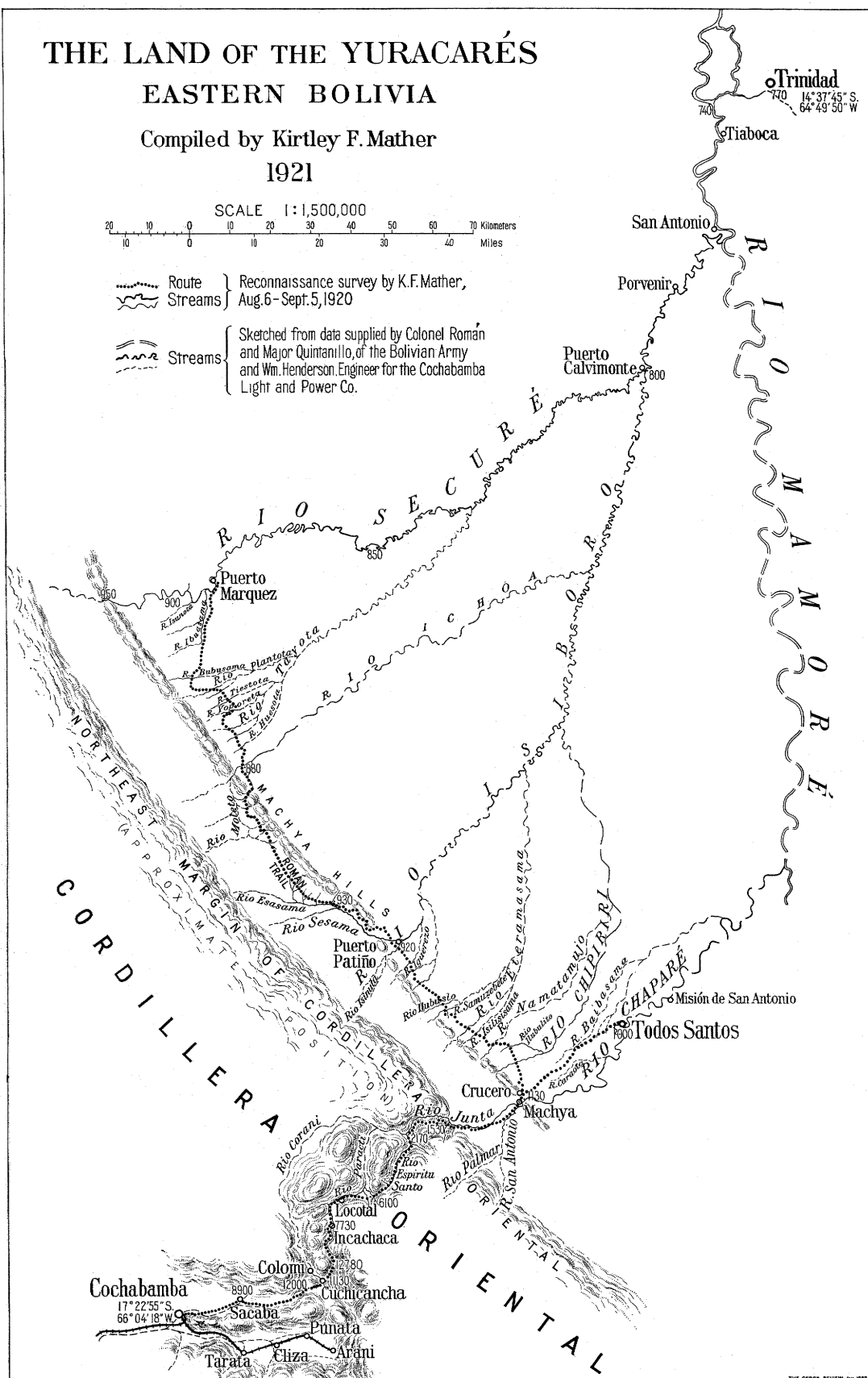


FIG. 1

1920, having crossed the mountains by the Cochabamba trail. Todos Santos is a little town of perhaps twenty houses built around three sides of a grassy square, the fourth side of which is open toward the Rio Chaparé. At this point the river is a hundred yards wide and flows between banks which during the dry season are twenty feet high but are awash during the rainy season extending from November to April. The port is at the head of navigation for a small wood-burning steamboat; but during times of low water this boat is frequently unable to ascend quite to the town and is then forced to transfer its cargo and passengers in small boats or canoes for the last few miles of the journey. Hides and alcohol from the cattle ranches and sugar plantations of the lowlands are shipped in considerable quantity up the Chaparé to Todos Santos and thence are transported on mule back to the markets on the plateau between the two ranges of the Andes. Cloth and other merchandise of foreign manufacture find their way from the Pacific coast across the mountains to this port and eventually reach consumers in the lowland towns and trading posts. Here, too, are the headquarters of the Batallón Zapadores, a part of the Corps of Engineers of the Bolivian army, which is at present doing valiant service exploring the jungles of northeastern Bolivia, cutting trails, building roads, and constructing bridges. It is less than a score of years since all this jungle was inhabited by *bárbaros*; yet today the machinery for a wireless station to be installed here is on its way from La Paz, and within a few months communication with the powerful radio station at Viachi will be open.

#### THE MISSION OF SAN ANTONIO

August 13, 1920, was a great day for the land of the Yuracarés, although no whisper of its importance has yet been echoed abroad. On that day the Zapadores completed the trail which connects the headwaters of the Chaparé with those of the Securé and permits for the first time the passage of the jungle into which it had hitherto been possible to penetrate only a mile or two from the navigable streams. It is planned to carry this trail on across the mountains to Cochabamba and thus provide a route over which cattle may be driven from the extensive pampas north of the Rio Securé—the grasslands of the Beni—to slaughterhouses in the cities on the plateau. This work is being prosecuted under the efficient leadership of Colonel Román, and in his honor the completed portion of the trail is named the “Román Trail” on the accompanying map. It had been our intention to reach our destination on the upper Securé by canoe, going down the Chaparé to the Mamoré and down it to the mouth of the Securé, but when the Colonel told us of his new trail we changed our plans and decided to take the shorter route overland.

This meant a walk of at least ten days through the jungle, for the trail is not yet in condition for mules or even burros—I doubt if it ever will be; and therefore it was necessary to hire Indian carriers to pack the essentials of our outfit on their backs. Accordingly, we arranged to have our trunks

and boxes shipped down the rivers to Trinidad, and three of us canoed downstream to the San Antonio mission in search of carriers.<sup>1</sup>

Distances along the rivers in the land of the Yuracarés are invariably reckoned by the number of meander curves in the stream's course: the mission is "five turns" below Todos Santos; it took us three hours to paddle down on Saturday afternoon and seven and a half hours to pole and paddle back upstream on Sunday. We arrived there just at dusk and received a cordial welcome from Padre Fulgencio Lasingor who had been busy all afternoon caring for one of the Indian lads on whom a tree had fallen the day before. The poor boy was in a very bad condition, with a broken collar bone and a compound fracture of the arm. Among his manifold duties the padre seems to find that of physician and surgeon to his flock the most irksome; I fear that his knowledge of medicine and surgery is not quite all that could be desired when serious accidents occur.

On the bank of the river, in the midst of a clearing of several acres, there are a dozen palm-thatched huts of bamboo, all but two of which are merely roofs supported by long poles. One of these two is of course the chapel, where everybody attended mass early Sunday morning; and the other, equally of course, is the padre's home, workshop, and office. Under one of the shelters two Indian women were preparing the evening meal over an open fire, and in a few minutes we were seated at a roughhewn red cedar table, whose beautifully grained top was concealed by a square of ancient oilcloth, eating *comida* with the padre and his two overseers.

I gathered from the conversation that the mission is somewhat more an agricultural project than a religious venture. It was first established in 1905, and the present padre has been in charge for eight years. Under his direction the Indians, of whom about fifty families are attached to the place, have cleared fifty or sixty acres of jungle and are cultivating sugar cane, chocolate, tobacco, rice, yuca, potatoes, etc. The soil is extremely fertile and very deep. Apparently all kinds of things, from onions to oranges, can be grown without difficulty. Only the crudest of agricultural methods are used; there are no modern implements or machinery of any sort; the juice of the sugar cane is fermented in a hollow log trough, and from it alcohol is distilled in a huge earthenware pot. But even this is a long step in advance for Indians who a few years ago were nomad savages subsisting on fish and game, with the soft heart of a particular palm tree and now and then a little yuca as their only vegetables.

#### THE YURACARÉ INDIANS

The Yuracaré Indians are in the interesting transition stage between absolute savagery on the one hand and complete dependence upon white men on the other. Their territory is bordered on the southeast by that of the Sirionós, one of the wildest of Indian tribes in all South America. In

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the mission see also L. E. Miller: The Yuracaré Indians of Eastern Bolivia, *Geogr. Rev.*, Vol. 4, 1917, pp. 450-464.

1913 a launch ascending the Rio Ichilo for exploratory purposes was forced to turn back because of attacks upon it made by these Indians, armed with poisoned arrows; and no attempt to explore that river has since been made. The Yuracarés seem never to have had the evil reputation of the Sirionós. Gibbon, who passed down the Chaparé, described them as "half friendly to the white man."<sup>2</sup> At the present time the Yuracarés are completely friendly and perfectly peaceable. As I came to know them in the intimate life of camp and trail, I found them to be most agreeable comrades, happy and jovial in times of difficulty and stress, unselfishly sharing with each other the game which because of the necessity for rapid travel we had no



FIG. 2—The Rio Eteramasama, looking upstream from the crossing of the Román Trail toward the Machya Hills, which may be seen in the distance at the right.

time to secure in large amounts, dividing their burdens with scrupulous exactitude, and always alert to minister to the comforts of the *caballeros*.

The Yuracarés still retain the marvelous ability of primitive peoples to utilize the rich resources of the tropical jungle. In the absence of matches the kindling of a fire by means of fire sticks is but the work of a minute; a hemispherical depression is hollowed in the side of a stick of soft dry wood, a short rod of a particular type of hardwood, held between the palms of the hands, is rotated rapidly in this hollow, the smoldering punk which quickly forms in the depression is blown into flame, and the fire is ready. Many of the men with us carried their bows and arrows; the bows are six feet long, fashioned from the tough dark wood which forms the core of the *chonta* tree, carefully tapered at either end, and fitted with strings made by twisting shreds of the inner bark of another of the many useful trees abounding in the jungle. Because of their resistance to water, these bark strings are preferable to the imported cord of foreign manufacture, which the

<sup>2</sup> W. L. Herndon and Lardner Gibbon: *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon*, 2 parts, Washington, D. C., 1853-54; reference in Part 2, p. 190.

Yuracarés can now easily obtain. The arrows are about five feet in length and are of cane, tipped either with a slender lance of bamboo or a long, sharp, barbed point of ironwood. With these weapons the men kept themselves fairly well supplied with fish which they shot with remarkable dexterity in nearly every stream we crossed. Our camping places were usually the abandoned shelters of the workmen on the trail, but the night of our first *chancha*, or wild pig, hunt it was necessary to construct our own huts. Four Indians in less than half an hour cleared a space in the jungle and erected a palm-thatched shed, of ample dimensions for five beds, with an absolutely water-tight roof. Their ability as woodsmen is fully equaled



FIG. 3—The ferry canoe on the Rio Sesama. At the right is a portion of the sandy *playa* which appears at low water on the inside of each meander curve along the jungle streams. Beyond the canoe on the farther bank is a clearing for yuca cultivation.

by their expert knowledge of the rivers. The canoe in which I traveled for eleven days and for which I paid thirty bolivianos (about nine dollars) was thirty feet long and four feet wide, hollowed from a tree trunk and fashioned in graceful lines. With four paddlers near the bow and one steersman astern we navigated the treacherous waters of the Securé, going upstream for three days and downstream for eight, without even a moment of fearful suspense. Yet none of the men with me had ever before been on that river.

Most of my carriers wore shirts and trousers of foreign manufacture, but some were garbed in their aboriginal costume—a one-piece garment hanging from the shoulders and caught by a string around the waist, the whole made from the inner bark of the *bibbos* tree. This bark is peeled from the tree, pounded with wooden bludgeons, further softened by chewing, and dried. When properly prepared the “cloth” thus made is very tough and durable; when new it is quite white and is generally decorated with daubs of ocher; after repeated washings it becomes a brown drab; and this change generally takes place within a few weeks, for the Yuracarés are a very cleanly people. I offered to trade a pair of trousers and a shirt for one of these *curochis*



FIG. 4—The Río Ichoa, showing two dugout canoes ferrying the Yuracaré carriers across the deep stream from the shelter at the crossing of the Román Trail.



with an old man whom I met on the Ichoa, but he asked me to pay him cash instead. When I gave him four bolivianos (\$1.25) he was more than contented with his bargain.

Only two of our men understood Spanish; the rest knew nothing but their own Yuracaré dialect. Each little tribe in eastern Bolivia has its own language, and among the Yuracaré the advent of the Jesuit or Franciscan missionary has been too recent for the adults to have acquired proficiency in the language of the white man. This multiplicity of dialects in the lowland region attracts the attention of all travelers. It is in striking contrast to the widespread use of the Quechua tongue on the high plateau of the Andes. There, with the exception of Aymará-speaking sections of Bolivia, the one Indian language is known from Ecuador to Chile throughout the entire stretch of the ancient Inca Empire; but in the jungle the dialects are nearly as numerous as the rivers. As usual among primitive peoples, the vocabulary is very small and consists almost entirely of substantives and adjectives; verbs are seldom used; inflections and gestures count for much. If a Yuracaré wishes to say that there is water in a certain place, he merely says "Sama" with a nod of the head and a gesture to indicate the direction of the locality. If there is a plentiful supply of water there, he says "Sama-sama" in the same way.

### THE JUNGLE TRAIL

The trail from Todos Santos to the Rio Securé is entirely in jungle country. For the most part the land is flat, lying at an altitude of approximately 1,000 feet above sea level; but between the Sesama and Ichoa Rivers a low divide is crossed, and the altitudes noted there were between 1,200 and 1,300 feet. The trail is a "slashing" through the dense tropical vegetation which keeps the ground in perpetual shadow. From Todos Santos to Crucero this slashing is thirty feet wide, and throughout most of that section the ground has been entirely cleared of stumps and projecting roots. Beyond Crucero the width of the clearing is only three or four feet, and not much care has been taken to grub out the snags along the pathway. Even in the dry season the ground is everywhere water-soaked, and in many places the mud is ankle-deep, with pools of stagnant water much deeper still. In the rainy season the whole must be an impassable quagmire, which undoubtedly renders the trail useless during those months. After the foot traveler has abandoned the notion of keeping his feet dry he has little trouble traversing this route, but 15 miles is a big day's march. Mules or burros, however, are absolutely useless; not because of the mud but because of the numerous small streams and arroyos which must be crossed. Every mile or so there is a watercourse, ten to thirty feet wide and five to fifteen feet deep, the bottom of which is a morass of mud and soft sand. Felled trees serve admirably as bridges for a man, but animals must inevitably "bog down" if they attempt to plunge through the quagmire. At the time of our visit to the region

bridges were being constructed between Todos Santos and Crucero, but the needed hundred bridges farther on had not yet been even planned. Furthermore, there is absolutely no forage for cattle, horses, or mules anywhere along the entire 125 miles (200 kilometers) of trail; the work of making a cattle drive had really scarcely begun.

The general trend of the Román Trail parallels that of the eastern Andes, the Cordillera Oriental. Looking westward up the more open courses of the larger streams encountered along the trail, the rugged ridges of that cordillera, rising to altitudes of 8,000 to 12,000 feet above sea level, may be seen among the clouds which constantly shadow the range. The foot of these mountains is about 25 miles distant from the trail, but the higher peaks are twice and thrice that distance. From three to five miles west of the trail, throughout much of its length, there is a line of low hills and ridges, 50 to 200 feet above their surroundings, which also holds the same general direction, curving northwestward south of the Isiboro River and then swinging a little more toward the north between the Ichoa and Securé. North of the Sesama the trail bends sharply westward, crosses through these hills, and holds its position in the low country between them and the mountains until, near the Ichoa, it crosses back again to their eastern side. Throughout its entire length the series of low hills is apparently separated from the mountains by a belt of lowland ten to twenty miles in width. I have named this line of hills and ridges the "Machya Hills," from the army camp of that name at the point where it is cut through by the Rio Chaparé. So far as I could observe them these hills are everywhere covered with jungle vegetation similar to that on either side. Major Quintanilla of the Zapadores informed me that in laying out the route for the trail he cut his way for several miles due north from a point near the mouth of the Rio Sesama and found the country so broken by ravines and hills that it was impracticable to extend the trail that way. In some of these ravines cliffs of solid rock bordered the watercourses, whereas along the trail as it now lies there is nothing but soil, sand, and muddy clay to be seen.

The jungle as we traversed it abounded in game of all sorts. Tracks of the jaguar and panther were frequently observed, and many an evening we heard the low rumble of their voices in the distance though we never caught sight of these crafty creatures. *Wasu*, the small, short-pronged deer of the jungle, and *chanchas*, the wild pigs or peccaries of the tropics, were however not so wise. The latter run in troops of a hundred and more. Our Indians were especially gifted in the art of locating their browsing places, and the excitement of bursting through the jungle into their midst was about the only thing that broke the monotony of day after day of tramping through the mud. Monkeys, large and small, black and red, chattered at us from the trees or fled pell-mell from branch to branch high above the ground as we approached. Macaws and parrots of many brilliant hues screeched a warning far in advance of our progress, and "turkeys," ranging in size up to



FIG. 5



FIG. 6

FIG. 5—Chimani Indians on the bank of the Rio Securé.

FIG. 6—A dugout canoe on the Rio Securé, manned by Yuracaré Indians.

the five or six pound *mutun* with his brilliant crimson comb in striking contrast to his glossy greenish-black body, burst heavily from the underbrush as we passed by. Snakes there were none, and humming birds hovered blithely about their nests where their eggs were safe from all depredations except those of the monkeys. But the list of wild animals would not be complete without a mention of the *mariwis* and mosquitoes. Of the latter very few of the fever-carrying variety are in this apparently healthful region. The former, which live by the million along the banks of every stream, are bloodthirsty insects about the size of a small gnat, endowed with the ability to raise a blood blister wherever they bite.

Between the Chaparé and the Securé the trail crosses a score of streams sufficiently large to be dignified by names. The more important of these are shown on the map. All are eastward-trending and have their sources on the eastern slopes of the Cordillera Oriental. The majority are only twenty to fifty feet wide and during the dry season are less than knee-deep. Typical of such is the Rio Eteramasama. A few are of much larger dimensions, and the traveler must cross them in canoe. The first of these which we encountered was the Rio Isiboro, named on some maps Rio D'Orbigny, because that traveler during his journey across eastern Bolivia in 1840 made a camp on its banks. No regular ferry canoe has yet been placed at the trail crossing of this stream, but this will probably be done soon. Except after heavy rains, however, it is only breast-deep and hence may be forded without danger. The day we reached it had been preceded by a night of tropical deluge, and it was a foot higher than ordinarily. Much care must be used in crossing such rivers as this, for the current is very swift and snags abound. A few miles downstream, the Isiboro receives the water of the Rio Sesama, a stream of equal size; and from that point downstream to the Securé it may be navigated at all times by fairly large canoes or during the rainy season by motor boats. The Sesama is only about a quarter of a mile from Puerto Patiño, and a ferry canoe for it is always close at hand.

Some miles to the north is the Rio Ichoa, another affluent of the Isiboro and quite appreciably larger than the Sesama. It is eight or ten feet deep and 200 feet wide; its waters are probably navigable by small motor boats for some distance upstream from the trail crossing. Canoes for crossing it may be obtained from the Indians living there. No other stream, until the Securé is reached, is large enough for anything but small canoes during the dry season nor available for motor boats even during the months of high water.

At convenient distances along the trail the Zapadores have constructed stockades for the impounding of cattle and large substantial huts for the shelter of passers-by, but at only three places did we find any permanent inhabitants. The first of these was beside the Eteramasama, where two or three families of Yuracarés have established themselves. The second was Puerto Patiño, where lives the *cholo* administrator of the vast estate of Señor Patiño, Bolivia's wealthiest citizen, who makes his permanent

residence in Europe. Of the thousands of leagues of this estate, only a few score acres surrounding the *finca* in the forks of the Isiboro and the Sesama are under cultivation. The dozen or so Indian peons on the estate have cleared the jungle and replaced it by fields of sugar cane, yuca, rice, bananas, cotton, etc., and groves of orange and lemon trees. Just enough has been done to indicate the wealth of agricultural possibilities which lies dormant in this expanse of unused lands. Farther along, on either bank of the Rio Ichoa, there are three or four Indian families living in miserable palm huts surrounded during the day by clouds of *mariwis* and infested at night by a



FIG. 7.—Porvenir, the well kept *finca* of the sugar plantation and cattle ranch of Sr. Nestor Suarez on the banks of the Rio Securé.

nearly equal number of mosquitoes. Their homes are adjacent to tiny clearings where only yucas are grown between the tree stumps and logs. Similar conditions exist at Puerto Marquez on the Securé, except that here there is in addition one Bolivian family who keep a few chickens; and bananas as well as yuca are cultivated.

#### THE RIO SECURÉ

We reached the banks of the Rio Securé at Puerto Marquez, obtained two canoes there, sent all but ten of our Indians back to the mission, provided the rest with paddles, and completed our wandering in the land of the Yuracarés by spending a week and a half on that river. First, we paddled upstream to the point where the river breaks through the Machya Hills; then we swept downstream with the swift current of the river to its mouth and on down the Mamoré to Trinidad—a succession of delightfully lazy

days after the vigorous toil of the jungle trails. Traveling upstream our canoes made only about two miles an hour, and once after traveling all day we found ourselves less than six miles in a straight line from the point where we had started in the morning, so tortuous is the course of the stream. Going downstream with the current the canoes averaged five or six miles an hour; it is generally fair to calculate that distances can be covered downstream in one-third the time required for the upstream journey.

The second night after leaving Puerto Marquez, going upstream, we camped on a sandy *playa* close to a small settlement of Chimani Indians, whose domain stretches northward from the Securé to the limits of the jungle. They were living in squalid palm shelters, about the size of a large dog house, where the women and children sat patiently brushing the *mariwis* from their faces and legs while the men fished in the teeming waters of the river or tended their tiny *chacras* of banana trees. The Chimanis never wear the bark *curochi* but have garments of the same style woven on crude looms from the native cotton. At this settlement they had quite a store of fish and bananas; our lads, though unable to converse in the Chimani tongue, were soon established on a friendly basis and made astonishing inroads upon the Chimani food supplies.

Throughout most of its course the Securé is bordered by banks of clay or sand, capped with six or eight feet of rich black soil, which rise abruptly from the water's edge to the level of the jungle-covered plain. At low water these banks are fifteen to twenty-five feet high, but in the rainy season the water spills over them and floods the ground between the trees which crowd close to the brink of the channel. Where the stream cuts through the Machya Hills, however, there is a shallow canyon with walls of maroon and carmine sandstone or vermilion and brownish-yellow shale. Between these walls the swift stream is lashed into foam at two points by gravel bars which prevent the upstream progress of all except small canoes. Our boatmen were able to ascend the first of these *cachuelas* by using poles, but at the second they had to leap into the water and half carry the canoe upstream. Between the Machya Hills at this point and the mountains, whose serrate peaks formed the distant western sky line, the lowland belt is ten or twelve miles in width.

The course of the Rio Securé is that typical of all streams in old age: extremely tortuous, with meander curve following meander curve in dizzy succession. Many times after paddling steadily around one such curve we found ourselves within a hundred yards or so of the place where we had been an hour before. The meander patterns are quite distinctive; the curve is not an arc of a circle, but is formed by short, sharp curves succeeded by comparatively straight stretches. Moreover, the dimensions of each meander seem to be a function of the stream's volume. The Tayota, the first important affluent downstream from Puerto Marquez, is not large enough appreciably to swell the waters of the master stream; but the Isiboro, which joins the Securé at Puerto Calvimonte, nearly doubles the volume. The meander

pattern immediately responds to this change in size of the river, and the length of the straight stretches between the turns is approximately doubled. Similarly, below the confluence of the Securé with the Mamoré, there is another marked increase in the dimensions of the meanders corresponding to the greater volume of water in the larger stream.

From Puerto Marquez to its mouth the Securé appeared to be quite safely navigable for motor boats drawing not more than two feet of water, even during the low stage in the river. At a few points there are snags which must be avoided, but these are not a serious obstruction to navigation. During the high water of December to May it should be perfectly feasible for small river steamers to ascend well beyond Puerto Marquez. At present, however, the river is very little used. Between the *chacras* of Señor Marquez and those of Señor Calvimonte, near the mouth of the Isiboro, the banks of the stream are lined with undisturbed jungle. Wild ducks flew up from the *playas* by the score; otters slipped from the logs along the bank where they were sunning themselves and sought safety in the brown water; river porpoises frolicked around our canoes; and occasionally a cayman drew his long snout down from off a snag and hid himself while we passed by. Once, we stopped and raided the jungle on our last *chancha* hunt in this region, the Indians having discovered in some uncanny way that a troop of peccaries was concealed near by.

Between the mouth of the Isiboro and the junction of the Securé with the Mamoré, the Securé flows close to the southern boundary of the extensive grassy plains which stretch far to the northward until the rubber forests of northernmost Bolivia are reached. On these open pampas there are many large cattle ranches. One of these, owned by Señor Nestor Suarez, has its main *finca* at Porvenir on the north bank of the Securé. This is a typical Bolivian lowlands country estate with its wooden cane press and primitive sugar refinery. It was the first outpost of modern civilization we encountered since we left Todos Santos. We spent one night there, and the second day following, as we were proceeding down the Mamoré below the mouth of the Securé, we met another sign that we were leaving behind us the wilderness of the land of the Yuracarés. This was the *Ana Catarina*, the small steamboat which plies the rivers between Trinidad and Todos Santos, chugging patiently upstream on its monthly journey. Before night we had reached the port close to Trinidad, and our wanderings in the land of the Yuracarés were ended.

It is a land of wonderful opportunity, a land of great natural resources, where untold agricultural possibilities lie dormant. These jungles are susceptible of transformation into rich plantations whence can be made an important contribution to the food supply of the world. But this transformation can never be wrought by the present inhabitants of that land. The Indian inhabitants lack the ability to work without constant supervision; their intelligence is not sufficient to permit them to rise much above their present estate. Nor does it seem likely that this transformation will

be wrought by the present white population of Bolivia. Their handicap is of quite a different sort, for they are in no way lacking in intelligence or ability. Their trouble is that they have not learned the dignity of labor. For generations they have been schooled in the principles that a workingman is low caste, that only Indians and *cholos* are expected to undertake manual labor. They are born to be lawyers, army officers, politicians, and land-owners; farmers and craftsmen, never. And the combination is utterly failing to utilize the resources beyond the frontiers of civilization in Bolivia. The land of the Yuracarés will remain a jungle until a people who combine the will to work with a high order of intelligence enter it and transform it into the important food center that it may become.